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ASSISTANCE IN MINE CLEARANCE

Afghanistan, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritius, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Tajikistan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Viet Nam: revised draft resolution

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 48/7 on assistance in mine clearance, adopted without a vote on 19 October 1993,

Affirming its deep concern at the tremendous humanitarian problem caused by the presence of mines and other unexploded devices that have serious and lasting social and economic consequences for the populations of mine-infested countries and constitute an obstacle to the return of refugees and other displaced persons, to humanitarian aid operations, to reconstruction and economic development as well as to the restoration of normal social conditions,

Stressing its grave alarm at the ever-increasing presence of mines and other unexploded devices as a result of armed conflicts,

Deeply concerned that the number of mines being laid each year exponentially outweighs the number of such mines that can be cleared during that

time, and convinced of the necessity and urgency of an increase in mine-clearance efforts by the international community,

Recognizing the importance of recording, where appropriate, the location of mines,

Reiterating its dismay at the high number of victims of mines, especially among civilian populations, and taking note in this context of Commission on Human Rights resolution 1994/94 of 9 March 1994 on the effects of armed conflicts on children's lives, 1/

Bearing in mind the serious threat that mines and other unexploded devices pose to the safety, the health and the lives of personnel participating in humanitarian, peace-keeping and rehabilitation programmes,

Recalling, in this regard, its resolution 48/79 of 16 December 1983 on the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects and the convening by the Secretary-General of a conference to review and amend the above-mentioned Convention, taking particular note, in this regard, of the work of the Group of Governmental Experts at present engaged in preparing the review of that Convention and especially the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices (Protocol II) as a matter of priority,

Recalling also its resolution 48/75 K of 16 December 1993, calling for a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel land-mines,

Bearing in mind that significant progress needs to be achieved in these fields,

Recognizing that, in addition to the primary role of States, the United Nations has an important role in the field of assistance in mine clearance,

Welcoming, in this regard, the efforts made by the United Nations to foster the establishment of national mine-clearance capacities in countries where mines constitute a serious threat to the safety, health and lives of the local population,

Noting with satisfaction the inclusion in the mandates of several peace-keeping operations of provisions relating to mine-clearance work carried out under the direction of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations of the Secretariat, in the context of such operations,

Commending the activities already undertaken by the United Nations system, donor and recipient Governments, the International Committee of the Red Cross and non-governmental organizations in addressing solutions of problems relating to the presence of mines and other unexploded devices,

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1/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1994, Supplement No. 4 (E/1994/24), chap. II, sect. A.

Commending in particular the activities already undertaken by the Secretary-General, especially the establishment of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs as a focal point within the United Nations for coordinating de-mining and related issues,

1. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on assistance in mine clearance, 2/ and takes note with interest of the proposals contained therein as well as of the contributions by Member States and bodies that have observer status with the General Assembly in the addendum to the report; 3/

2. Welcomes the establishment by the Secretary-General of a voluntary trust fund to finance, in particular, information and training programmes relating to mine clearance and to facilitate the launching of mine-clearance operations;

3. Appeals to Member States as well as to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations to contribute to the voluntary trust fund;

4. Invites all relevant multilateral and national programmes and bodies to include, in coordination with the United Nations, activities related to mine clearance in their humanitarian, social and economic assistance activities;

5. Emphasizes again, in this connection, the importance of coordination by the United Nations of activities related to mine clearance, including those by regional organizations, and in particular activities relating to information and training;

6. Commends the Secretary-General for his efforts to make use of available resources to strengthen the coordination role of the United Nations, and encourages him to continue those efforts with a view to improving the effectiveness of assistance in mine clearance by the United Nations;

7. Takes note, in this regard, of the creation, in the context of the current reorganization of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, of a Mine Clearance and Policy Unit, which, with the support of other Secretariat units, especially the technical expertise provided by the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, is responsible for carrying out the Department's functions as a focal point;

8. Urges Member States, regional organizations, governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations to continue to extend full assistance and cooperation to the Secretary-General and, in particular, to provide him with all information and data as well as other pertinent resources which could be useful in strengthening the coordination role of the United Nations in the fields of mine-awareness, training, surveying, mine detection and

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2/ A/49/357.

3/ See A/49/357/Add.1.

clearance, scientific research for mine-detection and clearance technology and information on and distribution of medical equipment and supplies;

9. Calls upon all States, especially those that have a capacity to do so, to provide the necessary information and technical and material assistance, as appropriate, and to remove or otherwise render ineffective minefields, mines and booby-traps in accordance with international law;

10. Calls upon Member States and governmental and non-governmental organizations that have the ability to do so to promote scientific research aimed at the rapid advancement of mine detection and clearance technology;

11. Requests the Secretary-General to consider the convening, as early as possible, of an international meeting on mine clearance, to include a meeting of experts and a meeting of potential donors, in order to promote the work of the United Nations and international cooperation in this field;

12. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly before its fiftieth session a report covering the activities of the United Nations on assistance in mine-clearance activities during the past year and especially the operation of the voluntary trust fund;

13. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fiftieth session the item entitled "Assistance in mine clearance".